MOHICAN POINT ON LAKE GEORGE

BY W. H. SAMSON

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MOHICAN POINT
ON LAKE GEORGE

Mayon O. Brown
Bolton Landing N.Y.
Jan 1914

From the Author
N. M. Samson



VIEW FROM BOLTON, 1853
(The Oldest of the Illustrations)
Clay Island and Barker's Point in the Distance

MOHICAN POINT
ON
LAKE GEORGE



The Summer Home of
Mr. and Mrs. W. K. Bixby
of St. Louis, Mo.

With a Brief Glance at the History
of the Lake

By
W. H. SAMSON

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Scenes must be beautiful, which, daily viewed,
Please daily, and whose novelty survives
Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years.

—*Cowper.*

CONTENTS

	Page
In Explanation	9
Lake George	11
Visit of Champlain	14
Discovery of Lake George	16
Name of the Lake	19
Military Events	22
County of Warren	26
Town of Bolton	28
Mohican House	36
Docks at Bolton	46
The Cottages	48
The Grounds	49
Sports	53
In Other Days	58

IN EXPLANATION

Mohican Point, at Bolton Landing on Lake George, is the summer home of Mr. and Mrs. W. K. Bixby of St. Louis. This book is a modest attempt to describe it and its surroundings, and to gratify the natural curiosity of those who, having admired the most beautiful part of Lake George, have inquired into its history. The original intention was to limit the sketch to Mohican Point and the town of Bolton, but the writer has broken through these bounds and has outlined briefly the history of the lake itself. It was difficult to resist the temptation to do this, for no part of the United States is richer in historical events and associations. Most of the illustrations are from original photographs. A section of a government map gives the contour levels and the place names in the vicinity of Bolton.



TONGUE MOUNTAIN, BLACK MOUNTAIN, SHELVING ROCK, AND THE NARROWS, FROM BOLTON

LAKE GEORGE

LAKE GEORGE, far famed as the most beautiful of American lakes, has long been celebrated in song and story. For almost a century it has been the favorite resort of American artists, poets, and lovers of Nature, and it has been admired by tourists from all parts of the world, who have called it the "Como of America," or compared it favorably with the famous lakes of England and Scotland. Like Como and Windermere, it has the character of a noble river flanked by highlands, and it winds so gracefully by its many rocky islands that, at a single view, only a small portion of it can be seen, unless one climbs to the summit of a mountain, when, indeed, the whole lake lies in beauty below. Lake Champlain stretches away to the north, the Hudson glistens like a silver thread to the south, the Adirondacks loom up in the west and the White Mountains lie to the east, and all about the green hills roll like gigantic billows. As one sails over the lake, he is charmed by the scenes of exquisite beauty that unfold in rapid succession. The sparkling water, the brilliant sunshine, the rich verdure on the hills, and, at times, the dark, rolling clouds as a storm gathers on the mountains, all give beauty to a wonderful and ever-changing picture.

The lake is a little more than thirty-two miles long and has a maximum width, measured due east and west across the tip of Tongue Mountain, of 3.3 miles. In general, it is very much narrower. The

greatest depth of water (a little less than 200 feet) is found east of Dome Island at Bolton. The lake is 322 feet above tidewater. It flows northeast and discharges into Lake Champlain at Ticonderoga, where the total descent in rapids and two picturesque falls is 221 feet.

For half a century the statement was current that Lake George contained 365 islands, or one for each day of the year; the actual number, however, is not far from 225. Most of them are small. The largest is Long Island, which is often mistaken for the eastern shore; the highest is Dome Island; and perhaps the most famous is Diamond Island, not only because of the beautiful crystals of quartz, hardly surpassed by any in the world for transparency, which were formerly found in great abundance, but because of the military events which occurred there. Harbor Islands have the most tragic history. It was there that Parker's detachment was slaughtered by the French on the night of July 24, 1757; 131 were killed and more than 200 were captured, of whom a few were rescued by Montcalm, and the rest were tortured by his Indian allies. Since 1872 these islands have been owned by the Paulist Fathers, who have erected a chapel there, and occasionally occupy the islands as a camp. Many of the islands are owned by the State, and, by observing a few simple and reasonable regulations, may be occupied by citizens at will, though permanent structures may not be erected.

Within the past twenty years, many handsome summer residences, surrounded by beautiful gardens and velvety lawns, have been built on the western shore of the lake, and there has been an improvement in the hotels to accommodate the constantly increasing throng of summer visitors. Of these, the best known are Fort William Henry hotel at the head of the lake, the Sagamore, on Green Island at Bolton, and the Rogers Rock hotel, at the foot of the lake. The launches and steamboats owned by summer residents are numerous and handsome; two large steamers make daily trips up and down the lake; a Country Club adds to the enjoyment of the visitors; the new State roads make motoring a pleasure; and Lake George grows steadily in popularity as a summer resort.

No lake in America is so rich in historical associations. The Indians fought on its waters and its islands and pursued the deer on its mountains long before the white man came. From the earliest days of its recorded history, it was part of the great water route between Canada and New York, the control of which, being of supreme importance, was desperately fought for, first by the Indians of Canada and the Iroquois of New York, then by the French and English, and finally by the English and the Colonists. It was often the chosen battle-ground of the French and English; magnificent armies have floated on its bosom and their cannon have awakened the echoes of its mountains. At both ends of the lake, and on some of its islands, are remains



BUCK MOUNTAIN, DOME ISLAND, RECLUSE ISLAND, CLAY ISLAND, BARKER'S POINT, LEONTINE ISLAND, AND MOHICAN POINT

With Mohican House at the Water's Edge at the Left, 1872

bears, and other sorts of animals that come from the mainland to the said islands. We caught a quantity of them. There is also quite a number of beavers as well in the river as in several streams which fall into it. . . . Next day we entered the lake, which is of considerable extent—some fifty or sixty leagues—where I saw four beautiful islands. . . . Continuing our route along the west side of the lake, contemplating the country, I saw on the east side very high mountains capped with snow. I asked the Indians if those parts were inhabited. They answered me 'yes,' and that they were Iroquois, and that there were in those parts beautiful valleys, and fields fertile in corn as good as any I had ever eaten in the country, with an infinitude of fruits, and that the lake extended close to the mountains, which were, according to my judgment, fifteen leagues from us. I saw others to the south, not less high than the former, only that they were without snow. The Indians told me it was there we were to go to meet their enemies, and that they were thickly inhabited, and that we must pass by a waterfall, which I afterwards saw, and thence enter another lake three or four leagues long, and having arrived at its head, there were four leagues overland to be traveled to pass to a river which flows toward the coast." This is the first reference to Lake George. The waterfall (or rapids) is at the outlet of the lake at Ticonderoga; the river which flows toward the coast is the Hudson. Champlain saw the rapids, as he says, but he never saw the lake.

He was the first white man to behold any portion of the State of New York or to set foot thereon; and his visit in July, 1609, was the beginning of recorded history in this State, for it was not till the following September that Henry Hudson anchored the Half Moon within Sandy Hook, and began the exploration of the river which bears his name. While near Ticonderoga, Champlain had his famous battle with the Mohawks; he routed them, gave them their first experience with firearms, killed two of their chiefs with his own *arquebus* and began a war which continued, with occasional intermissions, until the French supremacy in Canada was ended. The French made friends easily with the Northern and Western Indians; but remembering always the firearms of Champlain, the Mohawks continued to be the implacable foes of the French, and in the main were the friends of the English.

DISCOVERY OF LAKE GEORGE

The first man to see Lake George and the first Roman Catholic clergyman to visit what is now the State of New York, was Isaac Jogues, a Jesuit missionary. He was born in Orleans, France, January 10, 1607, became a member of the Jesuit order in 1624, was ordained in 1636, and was sent to Canada as a missionary. He was a captive among the Mohawks in 1642-43 and was rescued by the Dutch. He reached France, but soon returned to Canada to continue his missionary labors among the



EAST END OF MOHICAN HOUSE. 1865



SOUTH SIDE OF MOHICAN HOUSE. 1865

Indians, notwithstanding the frightful cruelties to which he had been subjected. After laboring for a time at Montreal he went to Three Rivers to discuss peace between the French and the Mohawks. The terms were agreed upon; but when ratification was delayed, Father Jogues set out for the Mohawk country to adjust the remaining difficulties. It was on this journey that he discovered Lake George. The "Relation" of Father Lalemant, dated Quebec, October 28, 1646, says: "*Ils arrivèrent, la veille du S. Sacrement, au bout du lac qui est joint au grand lac de Champlain. Les Iroquois le nomment Andiatarocté, comme qui disoit là ou le lac se fermé. La Père le nomma le lac du S. Sacrement.*" (They arrived on the eve of the Blessed Sacrament at the end of the lake which is joined to the great lake of Champlain. The Iroquois name it *Andiatarocté*, as one should say, "there where the lake is shut in." The Father [Jogues] named it the Lake of the Blessed Sacrament.) The last clause has been incorrectly translated by some writers as "the lake of the Holy Sacrament." There can be no doubt that Father Jogues discovered Lake George "on the eve of the Blessed Sacrament"—that is to say, in May, 1646, on the eve of the festival of Corpus Christi, which was kept on the Thursday following Trinity Sunday in commemoration of the supposed Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament.

But on what day of the month? Here the authorities differ. The Rev. Benjamin F. De Costa, who wrote several excellent books on Lake George, says

May 29th. John D. G. Shea, the distinguished Catholic historian, agrees with him, but he accepted the date in Charlevoix whose "Nouvelle France" abounds in errors. In a note to his "Historical Discourse" on the battle of Lake George, the Rev. Cortlandt Van Rensselaer gives May 27th as the correct date. The New York State Historical Association has erected a marker on one of the islands in the Narrows, giving May 30th. The Rev. John W. Dolan, who prepared a paper on Father Jogues for this Association in 1904, says May 29th.

In the hope of settling this question beyond all doubt or controversy, the writer brought it to the attention of the Rev. T. J. Campbell, the scholarly editor of "America," whose monograph on "Isaac Jogues," published in 1911, giving the date as May 30th, is a recognized authority. Father Campbell conferred with the learned chronologists on his staff, and writes that some of the discrepancies arise from the fact that there were two calendars in the seventeenth century, and some Protestant writers, endeavoring to ascertain the exact date of the discovery, have based their calculations upon the old Julian calendar, while the Catholic historians have used the Reformed Gregorian, which, of course, was the calendar of Father Jogues. "The difference between the two calendars was ten days. It is an error, therefore, to assume that in 1646 Easter fell on the same actual day in the Old Style as it did in the New Style calendar. In the former,



MOHICAN HOUSE AND GROUNDS, 1868
Showing the Famous Old Locust on the Lawn

Easter Day was March 29th, and Trinity Sunday, May 24th, but it was incorrect to say that the Catholic feast of Corpus Christi was celebrated on the following Thursday, May 28th. The fact was that Easter, N. S., April 1st, corresponded to March 22d, O. S. So the Catholics celebrated it in 1646 a week earlier than the Protestants. This would make all the other feasts a week earlier. Hence Corpus Christi fell on May 21st, O. S., and its eve was May 20th. Therefore, the correct statement is that Lake George was discovered by Father Jogues on the eve of Corpus Christi, 1646—or May 30th, N. S., or May 20th, O. S." At the request of the writer, the Hon. James A. Holden, State Historian, has reviewed this question and comes to Father Campbell's conclusion. This, then, is the first time that a correct statement of the exact date of the discovery has ever appeared in print.

NAME OF THE LAKE

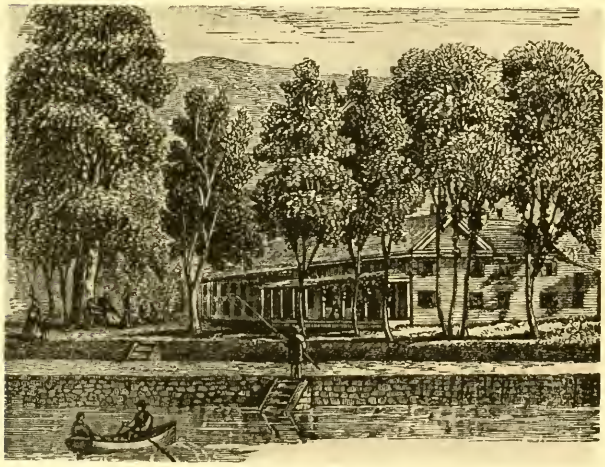
The name which Father Jogues gave was used in the "Jesuit Relations" from 1646 to 1764—more than a century—and was used by the English and the Colonials until the change made by General William Johnson, shortly before the battle of Lake George. Writing from the head of the lake to the Board of Trade in London, September 3, 1755, Johnson, then in command of the Colonial forces and their Indian allies, said: "I am building a fort at

this lake which the French call Lake St. Sacrament, but I have given it the name of Lake George, not only in honor of his Majesty [George II], but to ascertain his undoubted dominion here."

The new name was used universally by the English and Americans until James Fenimore Cooper in his famous novel, "The Last of the Mohicans," called it Lake Horican. He said that near its southern termination Lake Champlain "received the contributions of another lake, whose waters were so limpid as to have been exclusively selected by the Jesuit missionaries to perform the typical purification of baptism and to obtain for it the appropriate title of 'Saint Sacrament.' The less zealous English thought they conferred a sufficient honor on its unsullied fountains when they bestowed the name of their reigning prince, the second of the House of Hanover. The two united to rob the untutored possessors of its wooded scenery of their native right to perpetuate its original appellation of 'Horican.'" Here were two misstatements. The name which Father Jogues gave had nothing whatever to do with the purity of the water. The other was admitted by Cooper himself. In the preface to the edition of 1851, he said: "While writing this book, fully a quarter of a century since, it occurred to us that the French name of this lake was too complicated, the American too commonplace, and the Indian too unpronounceable for either to be used familiarly in a work of fiction. Looking over an ancient map, it was ascertained that a tribe of Indians, called



MOHICAN HOUSE, 1870



MOHICAN HOUSE, 1873

'Les Horicans' by the French, existed in the neighborhood of this beautiful sheet of water. As every word uttered by 'Natty Bumpo' was not to be received as rigid truth, we took the liberty of putting the 'Horican' into his mouth as the substitute for 'Lake George.' The name has appeared to find favor, and, all things considered, it may possibly be quite as well to let it stand instead of going back to the 'House of Hanover' for the appellation of our finest sheet of water." And in the preface to the edition of 1872 he said: "There is one point on which we would wish to say a word before closing the preface. Hawk Eye calls the Lac du Saint Sacrement 'The Horican.' As we believe this to be an appropriation of a name that has its origin with ourselves, the time has arrived, perhaps, when the fact should be frankly admitted."

The suggestion has often been made by thoughtless writers that the name of Lake George should be changed to Lake Horican, but in view of Cooper's admission that the name he gave had no historical basis or significance, but was purely fanciful and his own invention, the suggestion should never be renewed. There is no more reason for changing the name of Lake George—though named for an English king—than for changing the names of Albany and New York—named for princes of the royal blood—but if a change be insisted upon, just for the sake of a change, the lake should bear the name of the Christian martyr who discovered it.

MILITARY EVENTS

This is not a history of Lake George, but some of the more important military events may be referred to briefly. The first war party of whites that went down the lake was that of Gerrard Luykasse and Herman Vedder, who were accompanied by eighty Mohawk warriors. At Fort Ann, on July 9, 1691, they met the party organized by Major Peter Schuyler, of Albany, and agreed to proceed by way of Lake St. Sacrament and join Schuyler's party at Chinandroga (Ticonderoga) in six days, Schuyler's party to go by way of Lake Champlain. The two parties joined as agreed, forming a force of more than 250 men, and went on to La Prairie, where they attacked the French and had some hard fighting, getting back to Albany after many adventures on August 9, 1691, with a loss of thirty-seven killed and twenty-five wounded. In 1731, Crown Point was fortified by the French, and four years later they constructed Fort St. Frederic there, which they destroyed in 1759 on the arrival of Amherst and his army. The year 1753 marked the beginning of the old French war; two years later the French, having pushed on toward the lake, erected a fort at Carillon, now Ticonderoga. On September 8, 1755, the battle of Lake George was fought at the head of the lake, General William Johnson defeating the French under Baron Dieskau. This was a lucky victory, won by a general who had taken no precautions to protect his forces in case of defeat, who



CHURCH OF ST. SACRAMENT, 1872

lacked the ability to follow up his success, and who calmly appropriated the rewards that belonged to others. On September 24, 1755, Major Robert Rogers began his remarkable career as a ranger, and in the following October, Fort William Henry was constructed. On March 18, 1757, Rigaud made an unsuccessful attack on it, and four months later Montcalm, with a stronger force, was in motion against it. On July 24, 1757, Colonel John Parker, landing his men on Harbor Islands, suffered a fearful defeat at the hands of the oncoming French. On August 9, 1757, Fort William Henry was surrendered to Montcalm by Colonel George Monro, who had pleaded in vain for help from General Daniel Webb, who lay at Fort Edward with 4,000 armed men. The massacre of the garrison occurred the next morning, the tomahawks of Montcalm's Indians striking down the disarmed soldiers and the defenceless women and children. The French then burned the fort and retreated to Canada. On July 26, 1758, General James Abercromby arrived at the head of the lake and soon had under his command the largest army which, until the Civil War, ever assembled in the New World. It comprised 17,000 men, was well equipped, and covered the entire lake as it proceeded with martial music and flying banners on its way to Ticonderoga. A desperate assault was made on the fort, the blundering English general was badly defeated, and with 12,000 fighting men made a disgraceful retreat. On March 1, 1759, the seventh army for the conquest

of Canada began to assemble at Albany under a new general, Jeffery Amherst, and on May 29th got under way. His force was much smaller than that under Abercromby, but it was handled better. The voyage down the lake was begun on July 21st, and again the waters were covered with the boats of an invading army. The French found that successful resistance was impossible; they blew up Fort Ticonderoga, and on July 27, 1759, the English flag flew over it for the first time. The victorious Amherst pushed on and took possession of Crown Point on August 4th. The next stirring event was the capture of Ticonderoga by Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys, on May 10, 1775, and two days later Crown Point was captured by Warner. On July 18th Schuyler arrived at Ticonderoga and took command. In April of the following year—four months after the death of Montgomery before the walls of Quebec—Benjamin Franklin, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and Samuel Chase went down Lake George to see if they could induce the Canadians to join the Americans in the revolt against Great Britain. On June 16, 1777, the British general, Burgoyne, with a formidable army set out for Crown Point. On the night of July 5, 1777, Fort Ticonderoga was abandoned by the Americans under St. Clair. The British pursued them to the eastward and then endeavored to reach the Hudson by way of Lake Champlain and Wood Creek. This was a fatal move; the Americans felled trees and obstructed their advance so successfully that Schuyler



NORTHEAST FROM MOHICAN POINT, 1875

was able to raise an army to the south; and at length Burgoyne, defeated at Freeman's Farm on September 19th and at Bemis Heights on October 7th, was obliged to surrender ten days later to Gates at Saratoga. If the British general, after the capture of Ticonderoga, had gone up Lake George at once, it is not likely that his progress to the Hudson could have been prevented, in which case the British would have secured control of the entire water route from Canada to New York; New England would have been cut off from the Southern colonies, and the Confederacy might have been hopelessly divided. The battle of Saratoga was, indeed, one of the decisive battles of the world; it showed that the Colonial soldiers could stand against the regulars of England, and it led to the alliance with France, without which it is extremely doubtful if the Americans could have won their independence. While Burgoyne was struggling hopelessly against the Colonial army at Freeman's Farm, John Brown of Pittsfield—"the first man who had proposed an invasion of Canada" —was inflicting serious losses on the British lines of communication. He had been actively engaged during the summer on the shores of Lake George, and on September 18, 1777, he surprised the outposts of Ticonderoga, liberating a hundred imprisoned Americans and capturing nearly three hundred of the enemy; then he hurried up the lake, and late in September made his famous but unsuccessful attack on Diamond Island, which Burgoyne was using as a base of supplies. Captain

Thomas Aubrey was in command and repelled Brown's assault. Following Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga, there were no important events until the capture of Fort George at the head of the lake by the British expedition under Major Carlton on October 11, 1780. This ended military events on Lake George.

COUNTY OF WARREN

For many years the county of Albany embraced all of Central, Western, and Northern New York. On March 12, 1772, however, the Colonial Assembly created the county of Charlotte—named for Queen Charlotte—and it included what is now Warren, Washington, Essex, and Clinton counties, and part of Vermont. On April 2, 1784, as soon as it could conveniently do so after the treaty of peace with Great Britain, the legislature of the new State of New York changed the name, for patriotic reasons, from Charlotte county to Washington county. As the population increased, a division of territory was demanded, and on March 12, 1813, the county of Warren was set off from Washington county, and named in honor of General Joseph Warren, who had lost his life at Bunker Hill. The centennial of the county was celebrated during the summer of 1913 with appropriate public exercises in the various towns. Lake George lies almost wholly within the limits of this county. The several towns in which the county is divided are Bolton, Caldwell, Chester,



"THE HUDDLE," 1879



MOHICAN POINT, 1879

Glens Falls, Hague, Horicon, Johnsburg, Luzerne, Queensbury, Stony Creek, Thurman, and Warrensburg. The original white owner of the county was the Rev. Godfredius Dellius, pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church in Albany, who, in 1696, obtained a patent from Governor Fletcher for nearly all of what is now Warren, Washington, and Essex counties on condition that he pay the crown an annual quit rent of one hundred coon skins. He was deposed from his ministerial functions because of the resulting scandal, and is supposed to have transferred his clouded title to a successor in the same pastorate, the Rev. John Lydius, whose son, Colonel John Henry Lydius, claimed the territory and exercised some of the powers of a governor at Fort Edward. Other very extensive patents were granted in this region in 1708, 1762, 1772, 1774, and 1794. The first officers of the county were William Robards, county judge; Robert Wilkinson, surrogate; Henry Spencer, sheriff; John Beebe, clerk; and Michael Harris, treasurer. It was not until 1822 that the county was sufficiently populous to have an assemblyman of its own. The first newspaper, the "Warren Republican," appeared in June, 1813. There was a great outpouring of men and boys during the second war with Great Britain; indeed, of the male citizens of Warren county but few were left behind. There was another great patriotic outburst at the beginning of the Civil War; the population was small and there was little wealth, but few counties in the State made greater sacrifices for the Union.

TOWN OF BOLTON

The town of Bolton was formed on March 25, 1799, from the town of Thurman, and then comprised, in addition to its present territory, all of Hague, which was set off in 1807, part of Caldwell, until 1810, and part of Horicon, until 1838. The town lies on the eastern boundary of the county between Hague on the north and Caldwell on the south. A part of Lake George forms its eastern boundary, and the Schroon River separates it from Warrensburg on the west. The soil is a light, sandy loam, not wholly unproductive, especially along the lake, where fruits are successfully cultivated. The general surface of the town, however, is so stony and broken that not more than one-half of it is susceptible to cultivation. The surface is occupied principally by the lofty mountain ridges—a part of the Kayaderosseras range—which rests between Lake George and the Schroon River. The three prominent peaks of this range are: Tongue Mountain, on the peninsula between the lake and Northwest Bay, which rises 1,748 feet above tidewater and 1,426 feet above the lake; Pole Hill, in the northern part of the town, which is 1,584 feet above tide; and Cat Mountain to the south, which is 1,954 feet above. The mountains generally rise abruptly from the lake, but toward the west the surface assumes the character of a high, rolling upland. Among the mountains are several lovely lakes. Of these, the largest are Trout Lake (sometimes called Bolton



MOHICAN HOUSE AND GROUNDS, 1889

Pond) and Edgecomb Pond. The others are Wing Pond, Pole Hill Pond, and Indian Pond. The Bolton brooks running into the lake are Edmunds, Huddle, Finkle, Indian, and Northwest Bay Brook. Fly Brook, a pretty tributary of the last, runs wholly in the town of Hague.

The settlement of the town of Bolton was commenced in 1792, principally by New England people. Among the first settlers were Joseph Tuttle, James Ware, Rufus Randall, Benjamin Pierce, David and Reuben Smith, Ebenezer Goodman, Daniel Nims, Frederick Miller, and Thomas McKee. The first birth was that of Lydia Ware; the first death that of Mrs. John Pierce. The first school was taught by Sally Boyd. The first town meeting was appointed to be held on April 2, 1799, at the house of John Clawson, but "for want of accommodations was adjourned to Captain Stow's gristmill." The first church (Presbyterian) was formed in 1804; the Rev. Reuben Armstrong was the first settled minister. The first supervisor was Asa Brown, 1799-1800. In 1820, John J. Harris, of Queensbury, built three sawmills in Bolton, and for many years lumbering was the chief occupation of the people. When the timber disappeared the people turned their attention to agriculture. The population has always been small; in 1850, Bolton had only 1,147 inhabitants and thirty years later the population was even less — 1,132. There has been little change in recent years.

Nevertheless, the little town has been well known to tourists for seventy years; it has been visited

by hundreds of famous men and women, and it will always be a favorite summer resort for those who seek relief from the heat and stress of city life. Within the limits of the town is the most beautiful scenery on the lake. Many islands dot the water, and in the foreground lie Black Mountain, Shelving Rock, Buck Mountain, Pilot Mountain, and Tongue Mountain, while on the western boundary are the picturesque Schroon River and Lake. The following charming description, written by T. Addison Richards, while a guest at the Mohican House, was published in "Harper's Magazine" more than sixty years ago (July, 1853), and applies perfectly to conditions as they exist today:

"Of all the haunts on the lake, Bolton is pre-eminent in its array of natural beauty. In no other vicinage can you put out your hand or your foot, and in one leisurely pull on the water or in one quiet stroll on the shore possess yourself of so many and so richly contrasting pictures. The genuine lover of Nature may linger long at other spots, but here is his abiding place. Bolton is a township which, while having a name to live, is yet dead. It possesses a shadowy conglomeration of huts, which the modesty of the good Boltonians themselves dare not dignify with any prouder appellation than that of the 'Huddle.' The farmhouses round about are reasonably thick and well-to-do, certainly; but still Bolton, in the vocabulary of the stranger, is neither more nor less than the 'Mohican House,' whose esteemed commandant is Captain Gale, a name

next to that of 'Sherrill' most gratefully interwoven with the carnal history of Horicon. Yes! the Mohican House is Bolton and Bolton is the Mohican House; even as Bardolph was his nose and his nose was Bardolph. Great are both!

"Among the genial spirits who were our few fellow-guests here during two happy moons some year or so ago was one of Italia's most gifted daughters, whose voice has rung in melody through all this wide land, yet never in such sweet and winning harmony and with such worthy accessories as under the starry canopy and amidst the enrapt stillness of Horicon. '*Casta diva che in argenti,*' floating spirit-like over the glad waters and gently echoed by listening hill and isle, is not quite the same thing as when sent back from the proscenium of 'Astor Place.' Our Signorita had 'the heavens and earth of every country seen,' had known and loved Katrine and Windermere, Constance, Lomond, Geneva, and Grassmere, had grown to womanhood on the sunny banks of immortal Como, yet found sweet Horicon more charming than them all.* What better evidence of the sweet poetry and power of the lovely theme of our present memories can we have than the earnest and enduring emotion and sympathy it wins from the most cultivated souls, no less than from the wonder-stricken novice amidst the *chefs-d'œuvres* of Nature?

"It is no slight task to determine in which direction here to seek the picturesque—whether in the

*This reference is to Madame Parodi.

bosom of the lake, on the variedly indented shores, or on the overlooking mountain tops. Everywhere is abundant and perfect beauty. Among our poor trophies of the pencil we have preserved a little glimpse looking southward from the edge of the water at Bolton. [See the frontispiece.] Our only regret is, as we offer it, that, with our best seekings, we may still appear to the reader too much like the pedant in Hierocles submitting a brick as a sample of the beauty of his house.

"The average width of Lake George is between two and three miles. At the Mohican House this average is exceeded; indeed, at one other point only is it anywhere broader than here. All the leading features of the locality are commanded here. The islands within range of the eye are many and of surpassing beauty—and among them is that odd little nautical eccentricity called Ship Island, from the mimicry in its verdure of the proportions and lines of the ship. [The tree which formed the 'bowsprit' of Ship Island, lying close to Recluse Island, has long since disappeared.] The landing is near the mouth of the Northwest Bay—a special expanse of five miles, stolen from the main waters by the grand mountain promontory aptly called the Tongue. It is the extension into the lake of this ridge of hills which forms the Narrows, entered immediately after passing Bolton. Contracted as the channel is at this point, it seems yet narrower from the greater elevation of the mountains, among which are the most



MOHICAN HOUSE AND OTHER BUILDINGS IN WINTER
With the Famous Water Maple in the Center, 1894

magnificent peaks of the neighborhood. Here is the home of Shelving Rock, with its hemisphere of palisades and its famous dens of rattlesnakes; here, too, monarch of hills, the Black Mountain, with its rugged crown of rock, holds his court. Tongue Mountain is the favorite haunt of the Nimrods in their search for the luscious venison. Speaking of the chase reminds us that we owe a line to the sister sport of the angle. It is in the vicinage of Bolton that both these delights may be best attained, and particularly is it the field *par excellence* for piscatorial achievements. . . .

"Charming as are the scenes from the surface of the lake, they are surpassed by the glimpses continually occurring in the passage of the road on the western shore (the precipitousness of the mountains on the other side admits of no land passage), and commanded by the summits of the hills. Leaving Bolton, the road, which has thus far followed the margin or the vicinage of the water, steals off and sullenly winds its rugged and laborious way across the mountains, offering nothing of interest until it again descends to the lake near Garfield's—a tedious traverse of a score of miles or more. The interval is much more rapidly and pleasantly made on the steamer. From Sabbath Day Point and Garfield's the road again jogs on merrily in the neighborhood of the water. Descending the mountains at the northern end of this central portion of the lake road you catch a noble and welcome panorama of the upper part of the Horicon.

But returning to Bolton—we were about speaking of the delightful scenes from the shores thereat. Within a short walk northward, an exceedingly characteristic view is found looking across the mouth of the Northwest Bay to the Narrows. From all the eminences or from the shore the landscape is here of admirable simplicity, breadth, and grandeur. It is seen most justly as the morning sun peeps over Black Mountain and its attendant peaks. Looking southward from various points yet further on, fine views of the head of the lake are obtained—among them the French Mountain—terminating a pleasant stretch of lawn, hill, and islanded water."

Opposite Mohican Point, on which stands the summer home of Mr. and Mrs. Bixby, and half-way across the lake, lies Dome Island, the highest and one of the most beautiful of all the Lake George islands. This was one of six islands purchased from the State in 1856 for less than $400; it was then valued at $100. The others were Clay, Flora, Crown, Turtle, and Fourteen Mile Island. No doubt, frequent landings were made upon Dome Island during the French and Indian war, and it was one of the outposts of the Colonials toward the end of that contest. Here it was that Putnam left his men while he informed General Webb of the presence of the Indians and French on the islands near the entrance of Northwest Bay. There are no indications that there were any fortifications on Dome Island, and it is one of the few large islands on which no



MOHICAN HOUSE, 1901

building has ever been erected. Indeed, the only evidence that any human being ever stepped upon this island is a weather-beaten flagstaff at the south end. West of Dome a white flag marks Gull Rock, a famous fishing place. Southwest of this lie Ship (or Sloop) and Recluse Islands. The latter was the subject of the earthquake hoax of 1868; the New York papers published a despatch from Glens Falls describing how this island disappeared under eighty feet of water through a great convulsion of nature. The house on Recluse Island is the first private residence erected on an island in Lake George. It was built by Rufus Wattles, of New York, soon after the close of the Civil War. From a point in the steamer's course, after rounding Recluse Island, is obtained the finest general view of Bolton and of the lake also. Clay Island lies close to Recluse and at its southwestern extremity is separated from Barker's Point by a narrow strip of shallow water. To the westward is Bolton Bay. The local appellation of the southern portion is Huddle Bay, and beyond the trees that line the shore is the "huddle" of houses from which it receives its name. Within this part of Bolton Bay are three beautiful little islands—Leontine, Hiawatha, and Sweet Briar. From the summer-house on Mohican Point a fine view of the northern part of Bolton Bay is also obtained, and northeast lies Green Island, upon which is the Sagamore hotel. Beyond that lie the many islands that form the Narrows.

MOHICAN HOUSE

In 1802 there was no regular tavern in the town of Bolton and only four or five framed houses. On Mohican Point, where the residence of Mr. Bixby now stands, Roger Edgecomb had a framed house, probably erected in 1800 or a little earlier, which he soon enlarged and converted into a tavern, and with occasional additions and improvements it continued to be a tavern and then a regular hotel till the close of the year 1898. Myrtle Hitchcock succeeded Edgecomb about 1807, and immediately built the first store in the town—a little red building about thirty-five feet square—at the extreme end of the Point. It was kept by Samuel Brown. A small stone dock afforded a landing-place, and in the floor of the store is said to have been a mysterious trap-door opening into a cellar, wherein were concealed the goods which were smuggled from Canada. Samuel Brown succeeded Hitchcock as the landlord and afterward put up a building on the little bay north of the Point for the manufacture of potash. The ruins of this building could be seen in the water as late as 1880. On December 20, 1823, Thomas Archibald bought the tavern and considerable land with it for $300 from Peter Dow Beekman and Peter Edmund Elmandorf, executors of Jeremiah Van Rensselaer. On July 6, 1824, he sold the property to his brother-in-law, Truman Lyman, and the place became known as Lyman's Tavern. On April 2, 1851, Lyman sold



MOHICAN HOUSE, 1901

this tract of thirty-seven acres and 125 acres at Green Point, on the west side of Tongue Mountain, to Daniel Gale, whose father, Gilbert B. Gale, succeeded Lyman as the landlord, and remained there till 1856. Up to the time of this sale the tavern was of little importance. Gale, however, made extensive improvements and catered to the traveling public; summer guests began coming from New York and Philadelphia, and his game dinners soon made the tavern widely and favorably known. His sons Egbert and Gabriel named the hotel the Mohican House and erected the flagstaff surmounted by the wooden effigy of an Indian warrior, which remained the trade-mark of the hotel till it closed its doors in the autumn of 1898. This figure of the Indian is engraved on the Mohican Point stationery, and a facsimile will be found on the title page of this volume. The son Daniel (who, as the manager of a syndicate, built the first Fort William Henry hotel at the head of the lake) leased the Mohican House property in 1856 to Captain Hiram S. Wilson, who was the proprietor till the fall of 1861. On June 5, 1862, Gale deeded the Mohican and Green Point property to Myron O. Brown and Hiram H. Wilson (son of Captain Wilson). Mr. Brown, who has done more than any other man to popularize Bolton as a summer resort, was born in that town September 5, 1837. His father was sheriff of Warren county at an early day and served in the Board of Supervisors from 1846 to 1849; his son was a member of the same board in later years. Myron O. Brown

had been employed at the Mohican House in 1858, 1859, and 1860, doing his first work as a waiter when dinners were served under the trees, and becoming noted as the master of a sailboat and a guide for visiting anglers. On February 9, 1863, he deeded his half interest to his partner, Hiram H. Wilson, who became the sole owner and manager, and Mr. Brown removed to the little settlement known as "The Huddle," a short distance south, where he was a merchant for eleven years. A picture of "The Huddle" as it was in 1879 appears on another page. The building at the extreme right (vacant in 1913) was the one in which Mr. Brown kept his store. The large building in the center was the tannery which was demolished many years ago.

On May 6, 1864, William H. Barker, of Tivoli, Dutchess county, N. Y., bought the two tracts of land from Wilson for $3,600, and on August 18, 1864, bought from George B. Reynolds 100 acres on what has since been known as Barker's Point, a beautiful tract of wooded land, which was thenceforth used by the Mohican House as picnic grounds and which Mr. Bixby has recently improved with rustic bridges, footpaths, and motor roads. Mr. Barker leased the Mohican House to Abijah Davis, of Vermont, who was succeeded a year later as landlord by Stephen L. Clements, a Methodist minister, who came from Crown Point. He was an eccentric and unpopular landlord, and in 1871 Mr. Barker leased the property to Hiram H. Wilson, who became the proprietor for the second time and



A GROUP AT MOHICAN HOUSE, 1901

conducted the hotel for four years. His mind failed and he became a patient in one of the State asylums, where he died about 1907. In 1873, S. R. Stoddard, of Glens Falls, published the first of his long series of Guide Books to Lake George, and in that we find the first description of the Mohican House, as follows:

"The house is a long, low structure, two stories high, fronted by a piazza, and backed by a man who has spent the best part of his life catering to the public, H. H. Wilson, whose father before him kept the 'Mohican' for many years. On the Point where the dock now stands was once a building which had been used by a band of smugglers as a point of distribution for contraband goods brought through from Canada. The lawn is shaded by maples and locusts and the long Point is protected by a new and expensive sea-wall, extending quite a distance into the lake, and terminating in a substantial dock, where the guests repair at rosy morn and dewy eve to witness the arrival of the steamboat, which is considered the great event of the day."

In 1875 Myron O. Brown became the proprietor under a lease from Mr. Barker for five years (subsequently extended three years), and in 1879 the Guide Book tells us that "the house has been thoroughly renovated and refurnished; pure spring water has been brought through pipes from the mountains; and with boating, fishing, and livery facilities but little has been left undone that can

contribute to the comfort or pleasure of old admirers or newcomers. A pleasant cottage on the shore, just north of the house, with rooms *en suite* and tastefully furnished, is of recent build and adds considerably to the attractions of the place. The grounds receive constant attention; the guests are of the best; in short, there are few better or more deservedly popular places at the lake than the Mohican House." In 1876 Mr. Brown had made a decided improvement on the old house by constructing the porch on the east side.

On October 10, 1865, Mr. Barker deeded the Barker's Point tract to W. Rodman Winslow and on March 9, 1866, deeded to him the property at Mohican Point and Green Point. These deeds, however, were not acknowledged and recorded till September 13-18, 1879. Mr. Barker's death occurred at West Farms, N. Y., in March, 1881. He belonged to the distinguished Barker family of Philadelphia, and had no business or profession, but devoted himself to the management of his property which, till the last few years of his life, was of large value. When Mr. Brown applied to Mr. Winslow for a renewal of the lease he was unsuccessful, the latter desiring to take possession of the property himself. He suggested that Mr. Brown build a hotel of his own and named Green Island as a suitable site. Mr. Brown took the hint. Among the patrons of the Mohican House for several years under his management were E. Burgess Warren, William B. Bement, Robert



SIDE VIEW OF REAR OF MOHICAN HOUSE AND "THE LAKE COTTAGE," 1901

Glendenning, and George Burnham, all wealthy residents of Philadelphia. They formed the Green Island Improvement Company, bought Green Island for $30,000 (it had once been sold for $600), and under the personal supervision of Mr. Brown the Sagamore hotel was built. It opened its doors to the public July 1, 1883, and was destroyed by fire on the morning of June 27, 1893. This fire was a very spectacular one. It broke out just before dawn in the laundry of the hotel. The air was absolutely motionless, so that the flames shot straight upward, and without wavering or changing much in volume moved slowly and majestically along to the east like an enormous pillar of fire. It was owing to this circumstance that a large amount of personal property in the hotel was saved, but the building itself was totally consumed. A new hotel was erected at once and Mr. Brown continued as manager till 1905. In 1882, while Mr. Brown was proprietor of the Mohican House, he induced the government to open a post-office near by; he named the place Bolton Landing, and at his suggestion Frederick W. Allen was appointed postmaster. Mr. Allen's commission was dated September 14, 1882. He served till 1894. When the Sagamore hotel was built in 1883 there were only four residences at Bolton Landing, one store, and the Baptist Church.

In 1883 and 1884 the Mohican House was conducted under the general supervision of Mr. Winslow's second wife, Mrs. Estelle B. Winslow; in

1885 and 1886 by his mother, Mrs. Caroline Winslow; and from 1887 to the autumn of 1893 by Mrs. Estelle B. Winslow again. Elsewhere will be found a view of the house and grounds in 1889, and Stoddard's Guide of that year describes the property as follows:

"This is one of the desirable houses of Lake George, and has been noted for years as the resort of people of culture and refinement. There is no ostentatious display, but on the contrary it seems to withdraw from the public gaze and seclude itself among the trees and flowers that deck the lake front. This was once the main landing for Bolton, with the 'line boat' coming and going, but the runners and guests from other houses, and travelers passing over the grounds made it too public a thoroughfare for those who here sought quiet and rest, and a new dock was built in the bay at the north that would accommodate all the hotels of that section. The house is a long, low, rambling structure after the Southern style, with piazzas facing the lake and extending along its south side. The trees press their heavy tops against it, effectually shading it from the too ardent rays of the sun, but underneath the wind can pass freely and the views of the lake are interfered with scarcely at all. The parlor and dining-room afford space for general assembly, and there are neat, cozy sleeping-rooms, nicely furnished, with choice of ground or second floor. Such as may want greater seclusion than the main building affords



VIEW OF MR. BIXBY'S SUMMER RESIDENCE, 1910



VIEW OF MR. BIXBY'S SUMMER RESIDENCE, 1912
Erected 1901-02 on the Site of Mohican House

find in the cottage on the shore of the lake at the north spacious and desirable quarters, while toward the west is a newer and larger building with superior furnishings and equipment. The table and service are excellent—neat, clean, and appetizing, and in its dainty niceness very attractive to the refined taste. For amusement, croquet is played under the trees, while lovers of tennis, or polo, or the national game find space on the level grounds at the west. The roads of Bolton are varied and picturesque, and those who enjoy riding or driving can secure means for the pleasure here. For boating or fishing, a fleet of lake boats dancing on the water south of the Point invites attention, and guides and fishermen stand ready for service. Here also is one of the finest bathing beaches on the lake, with sandy bottom sloping gradually out into deep water."

On September 1, 1893, Frank Clark, long an employee of the Winslow family, took the property under a lease from Mr. Winslow and managed the hotel until the autumn of 1898, his lease expiring August 31st. By this time the old hotel had outlived its usefulness as an inn; it had become antiquated, was lighted with lamps, had few modern conveniences, and the character of travel had so changed that it was inadvisable to make extensive improvements in the hope that it might regain its popularity with the traveling public. The Glens Falls Insurance Company foreclosed mortgages of $13,000 early in 1899 and bought in the property, which, in addition to

the thirty-seven acres about the hotel, included 100 acres on Barker's Point, just south of Clay Island, and 125 acres at Green Point on the west side of Tongue Mountain. The company then sold the entire property to Mr. W. K. Bixby, of St. Louis, Mo., whose wife, Mrs. Lillian (Tuttle) Bixby, was born in the town of Bolton, and knew and loved Lake George. During part of the summer of that year, Mr. Bixby and his family lived at the Sagamore hotel and at the Tuttle homestead. He then bought from Mrs. Estelle B. Winslow "the spring lot" on the Potter Hill road in order to have an adequate water supply, and also bought from her the contents of the old Mohican House. Accordingly, he and his family occupied the house as a private residence in the summers of 1900 and 1901. It was Mr. Bixby's hope that the old house could be restored and preserved, but the timbers were found decayed and worm-eaten. The house was therefore torn down, and in the autumn and winter of 1901–1902 a large and handsome residence in the Colonial style was erected on the site of the old hotel. It was the proud boast of the latest landlords that from the earliest times the Mohican House was never closed; in winter as well as in summer it received and entertained all who came.

Winston Churchill, the American novelist, went to Bolton Landing in the early summer of 1896 with his wife, and occupied "Villa Matilda," a cottage standing on the Ferdinand Thieriot property, just south of the Mohican House. There, on July 10th,



MR. BIXBY'S RESIDENCE—A WINTER VIEW

his daughter Mabel was born, and there he finished his first book, "The Celebrity." In a letter to the writer, Mr. Churchill says: "I have never forgotten that summer on the very border of one of the most beautiful lakes in this country. I spent much of my time trying to catch bass, with fair success. The boatmen had a custom then of keeping all the fish one caught. In order to obviate this, I learned the different shoals, and got my own bait. My record for bass was seven pounds, caught on a crayfish. I have always intended to go back and try it again." Herman Broesel, of New York, who, with his family, had been guests at the Mohican House for several years, bought the Thieriot property in 1898 and lived in "Villa Matilda" until a large and elegant residence was built. On the Broesel property still stands a white cottage called "Solitude." For many years it was occupied by Mrs. L. H. Myers, of Staten Island, for whom it was built by Mr. Thieriot. Later it was the summer home of George William Warren, organist of St. Thomas' Church in New York.

An examination of the hotel register from May 1, 1883, to the time the hotel was closed forever, shows that J. H. Burnham of Glens Falls, N. Y., was the first guest, and that J. E. Blacker and wife, of Boston, who registered September 12, 1898, were the last. Among the many well-known people whose names appear during these years are the following: George Haven Putnam, Pliny T. Sexton, Clara Barton, Stephen Loines, General and Mrs.

Stewart L. Woodford, James O. Putnam, Samuel Fessenden, Hugh J. Grant, Colonel Alexander Montgomery, Alfred G. Robyn, the song writer of St. Louis, Bishop Paddock, and T. C. Platt. It was a favorite stopping-place for tourists, and among the foreign countries from which guests registered were India, Germany, Nova Scotia, France, New South Wales, Saxony, Cuba, Scotland, England, Japan, Russia, and the West Indies. No trace of the hotel registers before 1883 can be found. It is believed that they were removed to the Sagamore hotel and were destroyed when that hotel burned on June 27, 1893.

DOCKS AT BOLTON

From the first settlement of the town a public road ran east from the main highway to Mohican Point, and on this Point the first steamboat dock was constructed, perhaps as early as 1824. This was used for many years, not only by the guests of the hotel, but by the entire community. In 1869–1870 the Bolton House was built, a short distance north of the Mohican, by John Vandenbergh, and the second dock in the town was constructed there about 1873. This hotel was enlarged in 1877; it was then made three stories high, had a French roof and two observatories, and could conveniently accommodate 125 guests. When the promiscuous travel through the Mohican House grounds became a great annoyance to the guests, the proprietor allowed the dock to fall into decay. Accordingly

the steamboats began landing passengers at the Bolton House dock. Next to the Mohican, the oldest hotel in Bolton was the Wells House, which stood on the north side of the Potter Hill road not far from the main north and south highway. Dorcas Wells kept boarders there as far back as 1865. In 1874 H. A. Dearstyne became the proprietor. In 1884 he secured, by permission of James Palmetier, of Chicago, a strip of land running through the Palmetier property from the main highway to the lake, and constructed in the little bay just north of the Mohican House the third dock in the town of Bolton, and the "line boats" made landings there instead of at the Bolton House. The Wells House was totally destroyed by fire on the night of Decoration Day, 1890. The steamers then used the Bolton House dock again. In 1903 Mr. Vandenbergh sold this property to Riley M. Gilbert, of New York, who tore down the hotel and built a handsome residence on the old foundations. The town of Bolton then leased a strip of land from the highway to the lake and along the lake shore and constructed the fourth dock on the Conger property, a little farther north. It is now the only public dock in the town.

When the Wells House burned, the land on which it stood, the road to the dock, and a strip of land between this road and the Mohican House property belonged to Myron O. Brown. About 1903 he sold it all to Mr. Bixby, who then made an arrangement with the town of Bolton whereby the public road

through his property was abandoned and the town received from him the road to the lake which had been opened originally for the benefit of the Wells House.

THE COTTAGES

When Mr. Bixby bought the Mohican House property, two large cottages that had been used by guests of the hotel stood on the grounds. The oldest of these, the "Lake Cottage," was close to the hotel; the other, called the "Road Cottage," stood on the extreme northwest corner, fronting on the highway. The first store in the town—the little red building built by Hitchcock about 1807 at the extreme end of Mohican Point—was torn down by Lyman about 1840, and the timbers, hewn by hand, were used by him in constructing a barn which stood on the south side of the driveway not far from the main road. The first blacksmith shop in the town had been built east of the site of this barn and directly on the highway. This was demolished about the time the barn was built. When Myron O. Brown leased the Mohican House from Mr. Barker in 1875, he tore down the barn and used the timbers in building the "Lake Cottage." This building was two stories high and contained twelve rooms. The "Road Cottage" was built about 1885 by W. Rodman Winslow and was three stories high. The first floor was of huge dimensions, and designed as a carpenter shop to be used particularly for the manufacture and storage of boats,



SUMMER-HOUSE ON THE POINT, 1908



POND ON THE LAWN, 1908

and opened directly on the highway. On the second floor were nine bedrooms and an assembly room; the third floor was a storeroom, and an outside stairway led to both floors. In the hotel itself were twenty-eight rooms for guests, and in the two cottages twenty-one, making a total of forty-nine. The usual charge for room and board was $3 a day for each person, or $15 per week.

When Mr. Bixby purchased additional land north of the original lot, he moved the "Lake Cottage"—now known as the "George Cottage"—about a hundred feet further north and had it rebuilt. The "Road Cottage"—now known as "Nearby Cottage"—was moved diagonally across the highway and was likewise rebuilt. Both are occupied in the summer by private families. It seems probable that some of the timbers in the "George Cottage" are the oldest hewn timbers at Bolton Landing; they have certainly been on the property for more than a century.

THE GROUNDS

From the north and south highway along the shore of the lake two long driveways extend across Mr. Bixby's property. One running west, bisects an extensive flower and vegetable garden and stretches on to one of the most beautiful pieces of woods on the entire lake. A few giant trees, spared by the first lumbermen, stand as guardians over the younger generation, but the woods are

composed mainly of second-growth pines, hemlocks, oaks, beeches, and maples, whose interlocking branches shut out the sun and shelter the ferns and wild flowers growing in profusion below. Deep layers of pine needles add to the beauty of this delightful retreat. Except that winding paths have been constructed along the margins of rocky streams to add to the pleasure of a quiet stroll, the work of Nature has been undisturbed. The other driveway runs from the highway directly east, passes the residence, and ends on the shore of the lake. Two rows of elms are growing so rapidly that they will soon join their branches above it. On the north side of the driveway is a walk well-nigh completely arched by elms and maples. South of the driveway is a beautiful pond with a little island and a rustic bridge. The water is conducted by underground pipes from the springs in the woods, and flowing over the spillway on the east side of the pond runs on to the lake. At the extreme end of the Point is a summer-house built on the foundation of the original dock, from which one may admire the manifold beauties of the lake in quiet seclusion. South of the Point is a long, sloping, sand-covered bathing beach—one of the very few on Lake George, for generally the banks of the lake are rocky and precipitous. North of the Point is the boathouse, a commodious structure, at which the fleet is moored. The "Forward," forty-five feet in length, with two gasoline engines and twin screws, is a fast and beautiful launch; the "St. Louis" runs by electricity

and will carry twenty passengers; the "Show-Me" is one of the modern hydroplanes with a powerful engine; the "Takonsie," an electric boat, fitted especially for Mrs. Bixby's use, is the one boat from which the disciples of Walton are barred; the "Weary"—so named because it goes as though it were—has long been a favorite electric boat for short excursions after bass; and a sailboat and a dozen rowboats and canoes complete the equipment. Scattered about the lawn are beautiful flowers, vines, and shrubs, partly concealing the tennis court and the clock golf course. Among the many beautiful trees are two worthy of particular notice. One is a water maple, twelve feet in circumference, standing north of the residence; it is perfect in all its magnificent proportions and is one of the most interesting trees on Lake George. The other, south of the residence, is a locust, fourteen feet in circumference, which was growing there long before the white men came, and is the last survivor in this vicinity of the trees which the Indians knew. Myron O. Brown, who was born in the town of Bolton in 1837, said to the writer in the summer of 1913: "When I was a small boy town meetings were held at the hotel on Mohican Point, and I used to lie on the ground under the old locust and watch the young men play ball. It does not seem to me that the tree has grown in size in sixty years." In recent times the giant locust, weakened by years, has shown in the topmost branches the effect of the winds and the storms,

but a photograph of it, reproduced elsewhere, shows the tree in all its majesty and beauty. Under it lies what is called the Sacrificial Stone, which Mr. Bixby caused to be removed from its original resting-place in the garden on the west side of the highway. In one of the early editions of Stoddard's "Guide Books" the legend of this boulder is told in these words:

"The legend of the Sacrificial Stone is the story of an Indian girl brought a prisoner from the shores of the Great Northern Lakes by the Mohicans in one of their periodical war raids through 'the Lake that is the Gate of the Country.' Arrived at their village here, a young chief, the pride of the nation, gazed into the stranger's dark eyes and was made captive by her grace and beauty. He would have taken her to his wigwam in preference to any maiden of his own tribe, but the old women of the nation had chosen for him another bride; and when he again went on the warpath, and the cruel old men and women only were in possession of the camp, it was decreed that the daughter of the Northern tribe should die. They bound her to the stake, piled fagots high around her slight form and lighted the death-fire; but even as the crackling flames curled upward, a supernatural form which shone like a blazing comet—stronger than a buffalo and swift as the wind—swept through the circle, scattering the blazing brands like playthings right and left, and, seizing the willing captive, dashed out again before the awe-struck crowd had recovered from their terror. Running through the growing

corn to the middle of the field at the west, bearing the slight form of the maiden in its strong arms, it sprang to the top of a large stone, and from it flew upward over the hills! The girl was never seen more, and curiously enough also the young brave came not back to his people. He had vanished out of their lives. But thereafter, at every coming of the tasseled corn, some warrior of the tribe was slain by a mysterious being who came out from dark *Ouluka*—'the Place of Shadows' west of the great peaks—a warrior who shone like the fox-fire of the lowlands, and whose cunning and might were beyond the power of human brave; and the body of his victim was left lying across the stone from which the stranger sprang over the hills. And the blood-stains on the rock took the shape of picture-writing, where the people read their fate; for the Great Spirit had decreed that for every fire-touched hair of the maiden's head a Mohican brave must die, until the tribe should be no more. As proof, the rock still lies there, and they who know will show you the footprints of the mysterious fire-chief, the blood stains of the victims, pictures of Indian faces and forms, of animals and birds and flowers and growing trees on the Sacrificial Stone of the Mohicans."

SPORTS

Those who visit Mohican Point in summer have at their choice almost every outdoor sport except polo. Mountain-climbing, picnics, and shore dinners,

boating and canoeing, motor-boat racing, trap-shooting, camping trips to the small lakes that nestle among the mountains, tennis, clock golf, moonlight excursions on the water with music, motoring over the new State roads, swimming and diving, and journeys up and down the lake to innumerable beautiful places, many of them rich in historical associations, furnish an endless round of pleasure. The Lake George Country Club, of which Mr. Bixby is president, has a handsome clubhouse and commodious grounds about four miles south of the Point, and the automobiles run there daily, carrying those guests and members of the family who would dine and dance, or play tennis and golf and compete in the various club tournaments. The large silver cup which Mr. Bixby presented as a perpetual trophy for the golf players was won in 1913 by one of his sons, Mr. William H. Bixby. Under the rules, his name was inscribed upon it, and he received a silver cup of smaller size as his personal property.

To many summer residents, the fishing on Lake George is a sport of irresistible fascination. Some, indeed, confine themselves entirely to fishing, while others permit golf alone to lure them from the lake. The fascination is due more to the sparkling water, the clear, invigorating air, the refreshing, health-giving breeze, and the magnificent, ever-changing scenery, which combine to make Lake George the most beautiful of American lakes, than to the number of fish that may be caught. For the truth is that the fishing, measured by the catch alone, is not



FOUR GENERATIONS, 1913



MR. BIXBY AND HIS FIVE SONS, 1913

as good as it used to be, notwithstanding the continuous efforts to protect the fish by shortening the season, arresting the poachers, and stocking the water; and the casual visitor, familiar with the lakes of the wilderness, usually complains of his bad luck. The skillful and patient angler, however, whose efforts are not restricted to a few days, seldom fails to satisfy all reasonable desires; and even the poorest and most impatient fisherman congratulates himself that the fates permit him to cast his line on such a lake as this.

The fish for which the lake has long been celebrated are the small-mouth black bass and the lake trout. The open season for the former does not begin on Lake George until August 1st, or a month and a half later than on other State waters. The shorter season is provided as an additional protection, and is so obviously necessary that there is cheerful and general acquiescence on the part of the anglers. The fishing is usually poor in August, good in September, and excellent in October, for as the season advances the bass move in constantly increasing numbers from the deep water to the shoals. The most successful anglers use minnows, dobson, small frogs, and crayfish for bait, and try crickets, grasshoppers, and earthworms when the bass seem fastidious or indifferent. It is well to carry a variety of bait, and in ample quantities, for it is hard to tell what the bass are waiting for. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." The boat should be anchored in from

fifteen to thirty feet of water over one of the innumerable shoals. It is almost useless to troll around the islands on this lake or along the shores; fly-fishing is seldom resorted to, and casting with artificial lures, so successful, especially at night, on many lakes and ponds, seems to be a waste of time here. The largest small-mouth black bass ever caught on Lake George, of which authentic records exist, weighed a trifle over seven pounds, but it is not believed that a bass weighing seven pounds has been caught in the last ten years, and one weighing six pounds would create a sensation among the anglers. Mr. Bixby has landed many bass that weighed 5¾ pounds each, but this is the record for Mohican Point. One forenoon in September, 1913, a Mohican Point angler caught two bass that weighed nine pounds; in the afternoon there was a decided increase in the number of ambitious fishermen, the same spot was revisited, and ten bass, weighing twenty-four pounds (four of which weighed sixteen pounds), were caught in less than two hours—all the large ones on crayfish. This was the season's record for one day.

Lake trout are caught in water from seventy-five to 200 feet in depth. Most of this fishing is done in July, before the bass fishing opens. Frost fish caught in nets are used almost exclusively for bait. These are tied and hooked onto Seth Green gangs and drawn slowly through the water, close to the bottom of the lake. Heavy sinkers, hanging about three feet below the line and twenty feet ahead of the

hook, enable the fishermen to keep their bait where they want it. The line must be drawn in or let out as the depth of water changes. There is no greater test of a fisherman's strength and skill than to manage two of these lines from a rowboat on a windy day, and power-boats are used by all except a few professional fishermen. Those who can catch four lake trout weighing from three pounds to eight pounds each in an afternoon are doing unusually well. The largest lake trout ever caught on Lake George, of which there is authentic record, weighed nineteen or twenty pounds. The largest ever caught by a member of Mr. Bixby's party weighed 14¾ pounds. Many have been caught that weighed from eight to twelve pounds. There is no doubt that the number of lake trout has greatly increased in recent years, but the number caught has decreased, owing to the enormous increase in the food (frost fish) upon which the trout live. It is probable that the large bass feed upon these fish also and are not so much inclined to frequent the shoals as they were before the frost fish were put into the lake.

The mysterious game fish of Lake George is the land-locked salmon. At long intervals one is caught on a lake-trout rig, and immediately reveals his identity (and shows his marvelous strength) by dragging the heavy sinker to the top of the water and jumping high in the air, which the lake trout never does; but it is doubtful if any angler on Lake George ever went out with the deliberate purpose of catching a land-locked salmon and succeeded

in doing so. Those who catch this splendid fish elsewhere with great success and visit Lake George with their flies and gangs are invariably baffled. And yet it is the general opinion of both amateur and professional fishermen that there must be a great quantity of salmon in the lake. The water has been stocked with millions of them; several rocky streams furnish ideal breeding places, and the young fish are often seen in great quantities. Who can solve this great piscatorial mystery?

The usual variety of small fish is found in Lake George, but with the exception of the perch they are worthless and a great nuisance to the honest angler. Perch weighing a pound are often caught and are highly esteemed; indeed, many prefer them on the table to either bass or lake trout. Occasionally the perch are found in schools, and can then be caught in great numbers. Two or three trout streams run into Lake George, but the native brook trout are so scarce and so shy that the laborious work of the fisherman who stumbles over the rocks and struggles through the underbrush is seldom well repaid.

IN OTHER DAYS

Lake George anglers will read with pleasure the following extracts from "Adventures in the Wilds of the United States," by Charles Lanman, an interesting work, published in Philadelphia in 1856:

"I verily believe that in point of mere beauty it [Lake George] has not its superior in the world.



BOATHOUSE AND RESIDENCE FROM A DISTANCE, 1911



A SELECTION FROM A MORNING'S CATCH, 1913
Small-mouth Black Bass—5¼, 4, 3¾ and 3 Pounds

. . . There are three public houses here which I can recommend—the Lake House for those who are fond of elegance and company, Lyman's Tavern for the hunter of scenery and the lover of quiet, and Garfield's House for the fisherman. . . . Horicon is the center of a region made classic by the exploits of civilized and savage warfare, and can safely be pronounced one of the most interesting portions of our country for the summer tourist to visit. I have looked upon it from many a peak, whence might be seen almost every rood of its shore. I have sailed into every one of its bays, and, like the pearl-diver, have repeatedly descended into its cold, blue chambers, so that I have learned to love it as a faithful and well-tried friend. . . .

"The days of trout-fishing in Lake Horicon are nearly at an end. A few years ago it abounded in salmon trout, which were frequently caught, weighing twenty pounds. But their average weight, at the present time, is not more than a pound and a half, and they are scarce even at that. In taking them, you first have to gather a sufficient quantity of sapling-bark to reach the bottom in sixty feet of water, to one end of which must be fastened a stone and to the other a stick of wood, which designates your fishing-ground, and is called a buoy. A variety of more common fish are then caught, such as suckers, perch, and eels, which are cut up and deposited, some half-peck at a time, in the vicinity of the buoy. In a few days the trout will begin to assemble; and so long as you keep them

well fed, a brace of them may be captured at any time during the summer. But the fact is, this is only another way of 'paying too dear for the whistle.' The best angling, after all, is for the common brook trout, which is a bolder biting fish, and better for the table than the salmon trout. The cause of the great decrease in the large trout of this lake is this: In the autumn, when they have sought the shores for the purpose of spawning, the neighboring barbarians have been accustomed to spear them by torchlight; and if the heartless business does not soon cease the result will be that in a few years they will be extinct. There are two other kinds of trout in the lake, however, which yet afford good sport—the silver trout, caught in the summer, and the fall trout. But the black bass, upon the whole, is now mostly valued by the fisherman. They are in their prime in the summer months. They vary from one to five pounds in weight, are taken by trolling and with a drop-line, and afford fine sport. Their haunts are along the rocky shores, and it is often the case that on a still day you may see them from your boat swimming about in schools where the water is twenty feet deep. They have a queer fashion, when hooked, of leaping out of the water, for the purpose of getting clear, and it is seldom that a novice in the gentle art can keep them from succeeding. But, alas! their numbers are fast diminishing by the same means and the same hands that have killed the trout. . .

"A clear and tranquil summer night, and I am alone on the pebbly beach of this paragon of lakes.

The countless hosts of heaven are beaming upon me with a silent joy, and more impressive and holy than a poet's dream are the surrounding mountains, as they stand reflected in the unruffled waters. Listen! What sound is that so like the wail of a spirit? Only a loon, the lonely night-watcher of Horicon, whose melancholy moan, as it breaks the profound stillness, carries my fancy back to the olden Indian times, ere the white man had crossed the ocean. All these mountains and this beautiful lake were then the heritage of a brave and noble-hearted people, who made war only upon the denizens of the forest, whose lives were peaceful as a dream, and whose manly forms, decorated with the plumes of the eagle, feathers of the scarlet bird, and the robe of the bounding stag, tended but to make the scenery of the wilderness beautiful as an earthly Eden. Here was the quiet wigwam village and there the secluded abode of the thoughtful chief. Here, unmolested, the Indian child played with the spotted fawn, and the 'Indian lover wooed his dusky mate'; here the Indian hunter, in 'the sunset of his life,' watched with holy awe the sunset in the west, and here the ancient Indian prophetess sung her uncouth but religious chant. Gone—all, all gone—and the desolate creature of the waves, now pealing forth another wail, seems the only memorial that they have left behind. There—my recent aspirations are all quelled; I can walk no further to-night; there is a sadness in my soul, and I must seek my home. It is such a blessed night, it seems almost sinful that

a blight should rest on the spirit of man; yet on mine a gloom will sometimes fall, nor can I tell whence the cloud that makes me sad. . . .

"The beautiful Horicon of the North! Embosomed as it is among the wildest of mountains, and rivaling, as do its waters, the blue of heaven, it is indeed all that could be desired, and in every particular worthy of its fame. Although this lake is distinguished for the number and variety of its trout, I am inclined to believe that the black bass found here afford the angler the greatest amount of sport. They are taken during the entire summer, and by almost as great a variety of methods as there are anglers; trolling with a minnow, however, and fishing with a gaudy fly from the numerous islands in the lake are unquestionably the two most successful methods. As before intimated, the bass is a very active fish, and, excepting the salmon, we know of none that performs, when hooked, such desperate leaps out of the water. It commonly frequents the immediate vicinity of the shores, especially those that are rocky, and is seldom taken where the water is more than twenty feet deep. It usually lies close to the bottom, rises to the minnow or fly quite as quickly as the trout, and is not as easily frightened by the human form.

"The late William Caldwell, who owned an extensive estate at the southern extremity of Lake George, was the gentleman who first introduced us to the bass of the said lake, and we shall ever remember him as one of the most accomplished and

gentlemanly anglers we have ever known. He was partial to the trolling method of fishing, however, and the manner in which he performed a piscatorial expedition was somewhat unique and romantic. His right-hand man on all occasions was a worthy mountaineer, who lived in the vicinity of his mansion, and whose principal business was to take care of the angler's boat and row him over the lake. For many years did this agreeable connection exist between Mr. Caldwell and his boatman, and, when their fishing days were over, was happily terminated by the deeding of a handsome farm to the latter by his munificent employer. But we intended to describe one of Mr. Caldwell's excursions.

"It is a July morning, and our venerable angler with his boatman has embarked in his feathery skiff. The lake is thirty-three miles long, and it is his intention to perform its entire circuit, thereby voyaging at least seventy miles. He purposes to be absent about a week; and having no less than half a dozen places on the lake shore where he can find a night's lodging, he is in no danger of being compelled to camp out. His little boat is abundantly supplied with fishing tackle, as well as the substantials of life and some of its liquid luxuries. He and Care have parted company, and his heart is now wholly open to the influences of nature, and therefore buoyant as the boat which bears him over the translucent waters. The first day his luck is bad, and he tarries at a certain point for the purpose of witnessing the concluding scene of a

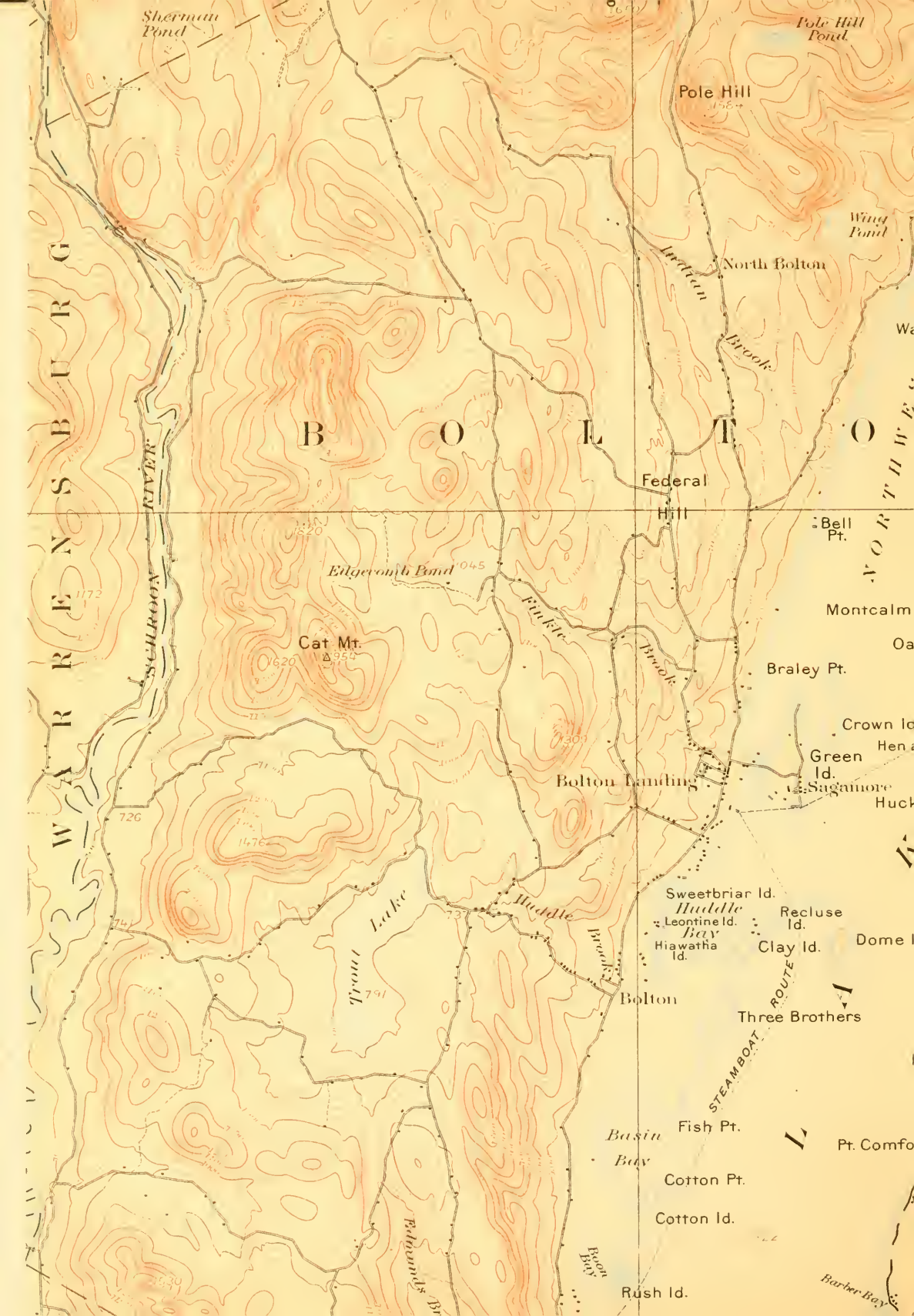
deer hunt, and hearing the successful hunter expatiate upon his exploits and the quality of his hounds. On the second day the wind is from the south, and he secures no less than twenty of the finest bass in the lake. On the third day he also has good luck, but is greatly annoyed by thunder showers, and must content himself with one of the late magazines which he has brought along for such emergencies. The fifth and sixth days he has some good fishing, and spends them at Garfield's Landing (for the reader must know that there is a tiny steamboat on Lake George), where he has an opportunity of meeting a brotherhood of anglers, who are baiting for the salmon trout; and the seventh day he probably spends quietly at Lyman's Tavern, in the companionship of an intelligent landscape painter (spending the summer there), arriving at home on the following morning.

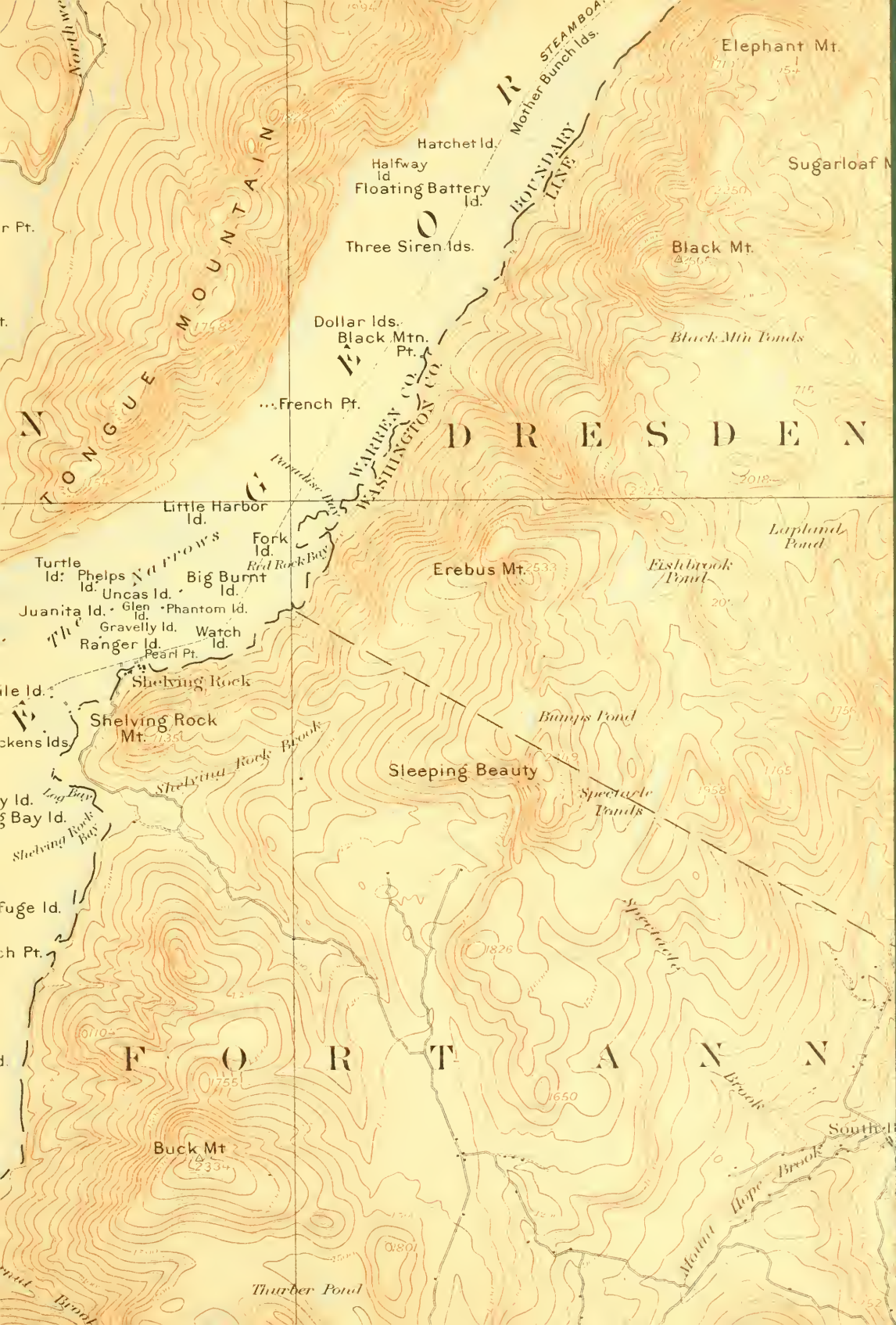
"As to my own experience in regard to bass fishing in Lake George, we remember one incident in particular which illustrates an interesting truth in natural history. We were on a trouting expedition, and happened to reach the lake early in June, before the bass were in season, and we were stopping with our friend, Mr. Lyman, of Lyman's Point. The idea having occurred to us of spearing a few fish by torchlight, we secured the services of an experienced fisherman, and, with a boat well supplied with fat pine, we launched ourselves on the quiet waters of the lake about an hour after sundown. Bass were very abundant, and we suc-

ceeded in killing some half dozen of a large size. We found them exceedingly tame, and noticed when we approached that they were invariably alone, occupying the center of a circular and sandy place among the rocks and stones. We inquired the cause of this, and were told that the bass were casting their spawn and that the circular places were the beds where the young were protected. On hearing this, our consciences were somewhat troubled by what we had been doing. . . . The bass that we took, owing to their being out of season, were not fit to eat, and we had not even the plea of palatable food to offer."

LAKE GEORGE

Near Bolton


Sherman Pond
Pole Hill Pond
Pole Hill
Wing Pond
North Bolton
Indian Brook
WARRENSBURG
BOLTON
Schroon River
Federal Hill
Bell Pt.
Montcalm
Edgecomb Pond
Cat Mt.
Finkle Brook
Braley Pt.
Crown Id
Green Id.
Sagamore
Bolton Landing
Huddle Bay
Sweetbriar Id.
Leontine Id.
Hiawatha Id.
Recluse Id.
Clay Id.
Dome I
Trout Lake
Bolton
Three Brothers
STEAMBOAT ROUTE
Basin Bay
Fish Pt.
Pt. Comfo
Cotton Pt.
Cotton Id.
Bean Bay
Rush Id.
Barber Bay


Elephant Mt.
Sugarloaf M
Hatchet Id.
Halfway Id
Floating Battery Id.
Three Sirens Ids.
Mother Bunch Ids.
STEAMBOAT
BOUNDARY LINE
Black Mt.
Black Mtn Ponds
Dollar Ids.
Black Mtn. Pt.
French Pt.
TONGUE MOUNTAIN
WARREN CO.
WASHINGTON CO.
DRESDEN
Paradise Bay
Little Harbor Id.
Fork Id.
Red Rock Bay
Narrows
Turtle Id.
Phelps Id.
Uncas Id.
Big Burnt Id.
Juanita Id.
Glen Id.
Phantom Id.
Gravelly Id.
Watch Id.
Ranger Id.
Pearl Pt.
The
Shelving Rock
Shelving Rock Mt.
Erebus Mt.
Laplandt Pond
Fishbrook Ponds
Bumps Pond
Sleeping Beauty
Spectacle Ponds
Shelving Rock Brook
Log Bay
Shelving Rock Bay
Sprucevale
FORTANN
Buck Mt
Thurber Pond
Mount Hope Brook
South
Broad Brook

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